

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 417

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the administration, faculty, and staff of Vanderbilt University's Peabody College, ranked #1 in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to specially recognize and pay Tribute to those remarkable educational institutions that have distinguished themselves as national leaders in higher learning and academic disciplines; and

WHEREAS, for the first time, Vanderbilt University's Peabody College has received the ultimate accolade from *U.S. News & World Report* magazine's annual guide, as it was named the top-ranked graduate school of it's kind in the nation, rising above such acclaimed institutions as Stanford, Columbia, and Harvard; and

WHEREAS, led by Dean Camilla P. Benbow since 1998, Peabody College has rightfully earned its place among the preeminent graduate schools in the nation, which is indicative of the school's attention to quality programs, exceptional research, esteemed faculty, and successful students; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being named the top graduate school of education in the nation, Peabody College's programs in administration/supervision and special education were both named the best in the nation, and programs in educational psychology, education policy, elementary education, and higher education administration also received top-ten rankings; and

WHEREAS, compiled annually, the esteemed rankings of *U.S. News & World Reports* are based on expert opinions as to program quality along with the utilization of statistical indicators that measure the quality of each school's faculty, research, and student body as more than 1,200 programs are reviewed by approximately 11,000 academics and professionals; and

WHEREAS, Vanderbilt University's College of Education and Human Development, Peabody College has a sterling history of exemplary service to the people of Tennessee that predates the creation of Vanderbilt University itself; founded as Davidson Academy in 1785, the institution became the University of Nashville in 1826, the State Normal College of Tennessee in 1875, and subsequently Peabody Normal College and George Peabody College for Teachers; and

WHEREAS, merging with Vanderbilt University in 1979, Peabody College was an early leader in the disciplines of psychology and human development and faculty members were among the intellectual pioneers of the field of special education, led by the work of Professor Susan Gray; and

WHEREAS, in the 1950s and 1960s, Peabody Professor Susan Gray conducted the research that led to the formation of the national Head Start program; the Susan Gray School at Peabody continues today to serve the children of Nashville, with and without disabilities, and the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development, founded in 1965, also shares this admirable legacy; and

WHEREAS, the 1990s saw Peabody move forward through innovation, first emerging as a national leader in learning innovation by utilizing new technology and new media to promote learning and secondly through the development of a groundbreaking undergraduate major, Human and Organizational Development – now Vanderbilt's largest undergraduate major - that combines human functioning and organizational theory with a strong practice orientation embodied in a senior internship experience with a growing number of Tennessee companies and nonprofit organizations to prepare future leaders; and

WHEREAS, a nationally recognized expert in talent development, Dean Benbow, is the Patricia and Rodes Hart Dean of Education and Human Development and has been the driving force behind Peabody's relentless climb to the top of American schools of education; Peabody College now enjoys an illustrious faculty that numbers more than 125, including nineteen endowed chair holders, and serves over 1,100 undergraduate and more than 700 graduate students from across the country and around the world; and

WHEREAS, Peabody College is also the home to a research enterprise that generates tens of millions of dollars in expenditures annually, producing cutting-edge research that broadens the total knowledge of mankind, as well as multidisciplinary centers for the study of learning sciences, the Center for Community Studies, and such federally-funded centers as the National Center for School Choice, the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities, and the National Center on Performance Incentives; and

WHEREAS, a national leader, Peabody College continues to aid the citizens of Tennessee in numerous capacities: partnering with public and private schools in Nashville and across Tennessee to develop programs that improve learning for thousands of children; providing annual leadership training to thousands of prospective and current school leaders and principals; supporting career development of education professionals through the Peabody Professional Institutes; and reaching out to gifted students and their families through the Vanderbilt Programs for Talented Youth; and

WHEREAS, for more than 200 years, Peabody College has benefitted the good people of the State of Tennessee through its contributions to the development of knowledge, preparation of leaders, support of practitioners, and its engagement of our communities to strengthen our common life; and

WHEREAS, it is highly appropriate that we pause in our deliberations to applaud and recognize the outstanding commitment to excellence in education exhibited by the administration, faculty, staff, and students of Vanderbilt University's Peabody College; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor Vanderbilt University's Peabody College on being recognized as the top graduate school of its kind in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report* and commend its many contributions and exemplary efforts on behalf of the good people of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.